

Message Text

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EUR/P - MR. SAVAGE
NEA/ARN - MR. KORN
H - MISS FOLGER (INFO)

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R 031957Z SEP 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY SANAA
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING SEPTEMBER 3,
1974:

QUOTE: Q. HAS THE UNITED STATES RECEIVED ANY INQUIRIES
DIRECT OR THROUGH THIRD PARTIES REQUESTING A HIGH-LEVEL
MEETING WITH THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION?

A. WELL, I'M SORRY I CAN'T DIRECTLY ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.
AND BEFORE I ATTEMPT IT, LET ME CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO
SOMETHING THAT MOVED ON THE FBIS A LITTLE EARLIER THIS
MORNING, WHICH APPEARS TO ME TO BE AN AUTHORITATIVE DENIAL
FROM THE PLO OF THE BASIC THRUST OF THE STORY TO WHICH I
BELIEVE YOU REFER. BUT ALL I CAN SAY IS I HAVE SEEN IT AND
THAT, AS YOU KNOW, IN THE COURSE OF VARIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH
ARAB OFFICIALS THAT AMERICANS HAVE HAD OVER THE PAST MONTHS,
WE HAVE STATED THAT AS PART OF ANY MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT,
THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIANS NEED TO BE
TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. WE HAVE ALSO SAID ON A NUMBER OF
OCCASIONS THAT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMMENT SPECIFICALLY
ON ANY OF THE DETAILS OF THE ISSUES THAT MAY BE UNDER

DISCUSSION IN THESE TALKS.

THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, OF COURSE, IS ONE OF THESE
ISSUES, AND I SIMPLY WON'T BE IN A POSITION TO GO INTO ANY
DETAIL FOR YOU ON IT. I REALIZE THAT IS NOT A DIRECT
ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION, BUT THAT IS THE BEST I CAN DO.

Q. I'M NOT SURPRISED THAT THERE WOULD BE A DENIAL. THE
STORY I HAVE SEEN MAKES IT PRETTY CLEAR THAT THE PLO
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WANTS THE INITIATIVE TO COME FROM THE UNITED STATES.

A. WELL, I'M SORRY -- I WILL JUST HAVE TO STAND ON WHAT I
SAID.

Q. YES. BUT BY CALLING OUR ATTENTION TO THE FBIS DENIAL,
WHICH I DIDN'T SEE, YOU MEAN TO DIRECT US IN -- WHAT ARE
YOU REPLYING -- THAT THE DENIAL IS CORRECT?

A. NO. I JUST THINK IT IS SOMETHING YOU OUGHT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN READING THAT STORY IN THE PRESS WHICH WE ARE DISCUSSING HERE NOW. AND I WILL JUST HAVE TO LIMIT MY COMMENTS TO THE GENERAL STATEMENT I MADE. I REALIZE IT IS NOT A DIRECT ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US IN SIMPLE TERMS WHETHER THE UNITED STATES WOULD MEET WITH PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES?

A. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT, AGAIN, AS A GENERAL MATTER WE HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIANS HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN ANY SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

Q. WELL, THAT IMPLIES THAT THE ANSWER IS YES.

A. I HAVE NO COMMENT ON THAT.

Q. IN THE PAST, OFFICIALS WHO ARE NOT TO BE NAMED IN PUBLIC HAVE MADE IT CLEAR, AT LEAST DID NOT DENY, THAT WE HAVE HAD CONTINUING CONTACTS AT A LOW LEVEL WITH PALESTINIANS OF VARIOUS SORTS, WHETHER OR NOT IT IS THE PLO ITSELF. NOW, ARE YOU INTENDING TO DENY THAT?

A. NO. THE PREVIOUS PUBLIC RECORD OF WHAT WE HAVE SAID ABOUT CONTACTS STANDS UNCHANGED BY ANYTHING I HAVE SAID HERE.

Q. JUST ON THE PREVIOUS RECORD, IN JUNE OR JULY -- I FORGET NOW -- A SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TOLD A LOT OF NEWSMEN THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE WILLING AT SOME

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APPROPRIATE TIME TO HAVE HIGH LEVEL CONTACTS WITH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS.

A. AND ON BACKGROUND, I WOULD NOT TAKE ANYTHING I HAVE SAID HERE TO CHANGE THAT.

Q. I'M SORRY IF THAT WAS IMPLIED ALSO IN ONE OF THE QUESTIONS, BUT HAVE THERE BEEN ANY CONTACTS AT ANY LEVEL BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE PALESTINIANS, ORGANIZED PALESTINIANS?

A. I CANNOT SAY.

Q. CAN'T SAY BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW OR YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SAY?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. DO YOU RULE OUT IN THE FUTURE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE PLO AND THE UNITED STATES?

A. NO. NOR DO I RULE IT IN.

Q. DO WE HAVE A SCHEDULE OF PRIME MINISTER RABIN'S MEETINGS WITH THE U.S. OFFICIALS?

A. I DIDN'T HAVE THE WIT TO ASK. BUT IT IS CUSTOMARY FOR US TO HAVE THESE A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE ACTUAL MEETINGS TAKE PLACE, AND I THINK THAT WILL BE THE CASE HERE TOO.

Q. WHAT IS THE DATE OF THIS?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. I THINK THE WHITE HOUSE SAID SEPTEMBER 10.

Q. IS THIS AN OFFICIAL VIST OR A PRIVATE VISIT?

A. LET ME GET AN ANSWER TO BE ACCURATE ON THAT.

Q. COULD I GO BACK TO THE PALESTINIANS?
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A. IF YOU MUST.

Q. -WHEN THE UNITED STATES USED THE PHRASE "THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE," IS THAT MEANT TO INCORPORATE THE CONCEPT OF THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE?

A. I WOULD LIKE TO DEFER AN ANSWER TO THAT.

Q. COULD YOU GET ONE IN AN HOUR OR SO?

A. NO, I DOUBT IT. I JUST AM NOT GOING TO GET INTO A DISCUSSION OF WHAT HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

Q. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN USING THE FORMULA "LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIANS"? IT GOES BACK ABOUT EIGHTEEN MONTHS OR LONGER, DOESN'T IT?

A. NO -- I BELIEVE IT GOES BACK TO A SPEECH BY SECRETARY

ROGERS, THE FIRST I REMEMBER, IN 1969.

A. IS THAT THE GALAXY CLUB SPEECH?

A. I BELIEVE IT IS.

Q. COMING BACK TO MARVIN'S QUESTION, IS IT NOT SO THAT IN VARIOUS COMMUNIQUE THAT WE HAVE AGREED TO WITH VARIOUS ARAB GOVERNMENTS, THEY HAVE SOUGHT TO HAVE PUT INTO IT RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL RIGHTS AND WE HAVE INSISTED ON USING THE TERM "LEGITIMATE INTERESTS". IS THAT SHIFTING NOW?

A. I'M AFRAID I AM JUST IGNORANT ON THE SUBJECT. I DON'T HAVE THAT REFINED A BACKGROUND IN IT.

Q. WHEN DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT GET AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONS ON LEGITIMATE RIGHTS AND NATIONAL RIGHTS"

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A. I DIDN'T KNOW THAT I HAD AGREED TO TAKE THAT ONE.

Q. I THOUGHT YOU ACCEPTED A QUERY ON THAT.

A. NO. END QUOTE. INGERSOLL

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